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BIGNONE ANNOUNCES ELECTIONS FOR LATE 1983

PY011730 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1658 GMT 1 Dec 82

[Text] Buenos Aires, 1 Dec (TELAM) -- Argentine President Reynaldo Bignone today announced that the government, together with the armed forces, has decided that elections will be held in 1983, probably during the last quarter.

The chief of state made these remarks at the end of the general meeting of the National Cabinet when he was leaving government house for the Olivos Residence.

General Bignone added that he is in constant contact with the union leaders and that the month in which the elections will be held will be decided in due time.

He made it clear that the day or the days on which the elections will be held have not yet been established because there are different opinions on the subject. The head of state said that while some leaders believe that elections should be simultaneous, that is, they should take place on a single day, others feel that municipal and provincial elections should be held first and national elections called afterwards, within 15 days.

On the demonstration arranged by the Multiparty Group for 16 December in the capital, General Bignone said: "We are following preparations for this act very closely and we hope that it will be as the Multiparty Group says it will be, that is, a peaceful demonstration which will help the process of national institutionalization."

The chief of state added that the stoppage announced by a union sector [General Confederation of Labor, Azopardo faction] for 6 December in no way helps the process we are engaged in. He stated: "We want the institutionalization of the nation to take place in peace and order."

Press Conference

PY012342 Buenos Aires Argentina Televisora Color Network in Spanish 1740 GMT 1 Dec 82

[Press conference granted by President Reynaldo Bignone upon leaving Government House broadcast during "El Show de la Vida" program -- recorded -- in progress]

[Text] I would like to elaborate somewhat on this subject. A few days ago in Posadas I stated that an electoral schedule should basically have, among other things, two conditions: In the first place it should be feasible from a technical point of view and acceptable from a political point of view in order to really yield the best results and consequently to achieve the objectives we are seeking.

From the work carried out and the consultations we have held so far, I can say that, technically speaking, the government is in condition to undertake the commitment of holding elections in 1983. I said that they would probably be held during the last quarter of the year because the fact that it is technically feasible shows that there are a number of steps which must be taken beforehand and which should be completed by that date. But then we have to consider the other aspect; that it should be acceptable from the political point of view. In this regard we are only going to disclose the year and not the month and the date for elections. From the talks which we have held, and continue to hold, with the interior minister and all the national political leadership, we have learned that there is almost a total consensus that the elections should be held in 1983.

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WEHNER DENIES PLOT TO OVERTHROW BIGNONE

PY030214 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1350 GMT 2 Dec 82

[Text] Bahia Blanca, 2 Dec (NA) -- Gen Enrique Wehner, the V corps commander, has categorically denied that he is responsible for writing an alleged secret document promoting the overthrow of President Reynaldo Bignone which was reported by U.S. columnist Jack Anderson.

In a statement to the newspaper LA NUEVA PROVINCIA, Wehner said that "this incident has already been denied by the army commander." He added that the document brandished by Anderson reporting a coup headed by Lieutenant General Nicolaides "is completely false."

Wehner had disclosed several days ago to a LA NUEVA PROVINCIA reporter that papers with his letterhead at his previous post -- deputy army chief of staff during the Malvinas war -- had been stolen to "invent" the document which Anderson has reportedly used to base his story. Moreover, Wehner said that "the wording and style" of this document "is completely different from the style used by this institution for this type of material." The military chief also said that "there was never an original of these papers" since they were rather "photocopies with my signature which had been copied from other papers."

Wehner thus answered Anderson's charges which were published yesterday in THE NEW YORK TIMES and which were picked up by our correspondent in Washington.

AGUIRRE LANARI ON RELATIONS WITH USSR, U.S.

PY020050 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1943 GMT 1 Dec 82

[Text] Buenos Aires, 1 Dec (NA) -- Foreign Minister Juan Ramon Aguirre Lanari today emphasized that Argentine relations with countries of the socialist bloc are facilitated by "the fact that we are living in an essentially bipolarized world." "This," he said, "is instrumental in promoting growing commercial and technological ties with the Soviet Union and its orbit of influence."

"In the above context, Argentine relations with the socialist countries are conducted within a basically commercial framework, without ideological or political overtones," he said.

Aguirre Lanari made the above remarks during a luncheon which the center of graduates of the National Defense School gave at the air force club.

Commenting on relations with the United States, Aguirre Lanari said: "They are not as good as the people of the two countries would like them to be."

"Although Argentine foreign policy has no permanent objectives or interests [as received], there can be variations in its implementation and in the search for instruments which would make possible its implementation," he said. He added: "While we have to be rather strict regarding the first aspect, that is, concerning objectives and interests; we could be more flexible in the stage of implementation."

Aguirre Lanari also referred to the southern conflict while Chile and noted that the Argentine Government hoped the papal mediation "will result in a realistic agreement which would preserve our rights in a visible fashion."

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UNIONS CALL GENERAL STRIKE FOR 6 DECEMBER

PY052027 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 4 Dec 82 p 9

[Text] The possibility of a near-total general strike for Monday gained strength yesterday, as all three sectors of the labour movement (the Brasil and Azopardo branches of the CGT [General Labor Confederation] and the non aligned unions) reaffirmed their support for the 24-hour nationwide work stoppage.

The secretariat of the multiparty grouping added its support to the measure as well, in a statement which read in part: "The legitimacy of any protest by workers cannot be denied until the government faces up to the persistence of this economic situation which tears the social fabric of the nation."

The CGT-Brasil officially announced its participation in the strike by releasing a document entitled "The Workers' Struggle Is Our Struggle. Our Struggle Is the Struggle of the People."

The combined influence of the three labour groups participating in the general strike of over more than six million workers practically guaranteed the stoppage of all industrial activity and public services, although most unions plan to post skeleton staffs to provide crucial and emergency services.

All the unions representing public transport workers have joined the strike, meaning that there will be no train, subway or bus services unless bus company owners decide to man their own buses -- which they have no plans of doing at the moment. The taxi drivers' union has also decided to take part in the strike. Unions representing port and maritime workers are also supporting the strike, so there will be no port activity whatsoever. The situation regarding airline flights is less clear, since union activists from that sector have said their union is in the process of normalization and cannot guarantee that the strike will be carried out, although they said a high degree of absenteeism among ground crews will probably snarl air traffic considerably.

The Municipal Workers' Union, which represents 54,000 workers in the capital, announced that there would be only emergency staffs at hospitals and to tend to street lighting, traffic lights and cemeteries. The same decision was taken by unions of workers from state companies, which will provide skeleton staffs in such services as the national water, electricity, telephone, telegraph and postal companies. This means that such essential services as water, electricity and the telephone will function on Monday, although probably with reduced efficiency.

The one-million member State Workers' Union, grouping government administration workers, teachers, civilian employees of the armed forces, etc, also supports the strike. So does the Commercial Workers' Confederation, which also represents about one million workers, as did the Actors' and Cinema workers' Unions. The National Grocery Store Owners' Federation also expressed support for the general strike and urged grocers and retailers to close their shops in a gesture of support for the measure on Monday.

Other Groups Join In

PY052109 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 5 Dec 82 p 13

[Text] The first general nationwide strike organized since the military came to power six and a half years ago is set to be a success tomorrow, with nearly all labour unions declaring they are going along with the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) Azopardo and Brasil factions' call.

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BIGNONE CALLS CABINET MEETING TO DISCUSS MARCH

PY171459 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1340 GMT 17 Dec 82

[Text] Buenos Aires, 17 Dec (NA) -- President Reynaldo Bignone has called a full cabinet meeting to be held at 1730 [2030 GMT] this afternoon. The meeting will discuss the events which took place during yesterday's march staged by the Multiparty Group.

Speech to Cabinet, Nation

PY180154 Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 0031 GMT 18 Dec 82

[Speech by Argentine President Reynaldo Bignone to his cabinet and to the nation from Government House on 17 December -- recorded]

[Text] Ministers, secretaries: I have called this cabinet meeting which will be unusual both in form and substance; unusual in form because the meeting will reach the entire nation through television cameras; and unusual in substance because we will discuss only one issue, while we normally meet around this table to discuss several issues related to the status of the government.

We will discuss only one issue because incidents occurred yesterday in the country, specifically in front of this very Government House, which I have to regard as serious. We should assume our share of responsibility and the national government should seriously face these incidents.

It would be really too dangerously easy for us, as the government, to limit ourselves to putting part of the blame on the organizers, who were warned in sufficient time that these types of incidents could happen. At the same time it would be too easy for us to let the organizers and other persons put the blame on the government for adopting measures to prevent chaos.

To do this would mean to not see the forest for the trees because the one truth in all this is that they [the political leaders] and we, we and they, are steadily seeking the same objective. We could perhaps, disagree on forms, dates, but all this can be solved through democratic dialogue.

What indeed became clear yesterday -- and this is what I felt I should plainly state before my national cabinet -- there are present in the country those who in no way share our same objective and this was proved yesterday.

The struggle for power is both legitimate and authentic. Although struggle may not be the most appropriate word, it is nonetheless significant. In this struggle the main instruments are precisely the political parties.

This is why I say it is both legitimate and authentic; and therefore, the demonstration staged by political parties is legitimate and authentic.

Instead, what we ought to make quite clear is that the government is ready and firmly determined to prevent anything which may not be in keeping with the legitimate struggle for power in the times and fashions which are established or will be established. That is, the government will prevent an assault on power, which is something entirely different and it became clearly evident yesterday that there are groups -- fortunately minor groups -- which seek to seize power through violence.

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AIR FORCE REPORTEDLY RECEIVES ISRAELI PLANES

PY201509 Paris AFP in Spanish 1240 GMT 20 Dec 82

[Text] Buenos Aires, 20 Dec (AFP) -- Military sources revealed here today that the Argentine Air Force has reportedly received a consignment of Israeli Dagger supersonic fighter planes to replace those that were lost during the Malvinas conflict. According to what has been learned, the planes, modified versions of the French Mirage V, arrived over the weekend at the port of Buenos Aires unassembled and loaded in containers. They were later transferred to the metropolitan airport in order to be sent to bases in the interior of the country.

A large security operation, which included members from the police and armed forces, was carried out yesterday around the airport. The operation caused quite a few rumors, some to the effect that a group of smugglers was being arrested.

Although no official information has been released, on the grounds that it is a question of national security, the sources revealed that a group of Israeli military advisers arrived with the consignment.

After the conflict with Great Britain over the Malvinas, the Argentine Air Force announced its intention to replace the lost combat units, which were basically Mirage III, Dagger and Skyhawk A4P fighter-bombers and interceptors.

Security Operation at Airport

PY201854 Buenos Aires CRONICA in Spanish 20 Dec 82 p 8

[Text] A security operation was carried out early yesterday morning in a large area around the metropolitan airport. Air force personnel and members of the Federal Police participated in the operation and while it was under way several adjacent streets were closed.

Despite the total secrecy that was maintained at the Condor Building, air force headquarters, it was learned yesterday from reliable sources that the security operation was implemented to cover another operation that was termed a "national security secret."

During the course of the security operation, which lasted from 0100 [0400 GMT] to 0500 [0800 GMT], air force personnel proceeded to transfer materiel that had arrived in the country by ship to the interior of the country. This military materiel, spare parts for supersonic and subsonic planes, which had been purchased some time ago by the air force, was first sent to the military area of the Jorge Newberry Airport and was then transferred to air force bases in the interior of the country.

According to what has been learned, it was a routine resupply operation. The operation is part of the plans to train specialized personnel and maintain in optimum condition the force's units, mainly those on the bases for supersonic and subsonic planes.

VENEZUELAN NAVY COMMANDER ARRIVES 18 DECEMBER

PY210142 Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 2000 GMT 20 Dec 82

[Excerpt] Venezuelan Navy Commander in Chief Vice Adm Jesus Rafael Bertorelli, who arrived on 18 December on an official visit, has paid protocol visits to the commanders of the three armed forces. He has also met with the Buenos Aires mayor and the Venezuelan ambassador to Argentina. Vice Admiral Bertorelli met with Defense Minister Julio Martinez Vivot at 1900 GMT today.

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PY240053 Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 2330 GMT 23 Dec 82

[Speech by President Reynado Bignone on the occasion of receiving Christmas and year-end greetings from government officials and other dignitaries at Government House in Buenos Aires on 23 December -- recorded]

[Excerpt] Thank you all once again for being here together.

If we were to describe this coming year of 1983 in advance we would have to say that it will be marked by political events -- something which is in no way bad because politics are the channel for coexistence -- I would like to take advantage of your patience, of the fact that the year is almost over, of having practically the entire government gathered here, and of the presence of his reverend eminence, the cardinal primate of Argentina, to make some political announcements. I have chosen this occasion to do so because more than anything else these announcements are a commitment of the government itself and thus I want to make them in the presence of all the members of the government.

After an entire afternoon of work with the Interior Ministry team yesterday and after the meeting today with the military junta, I can now promise, on behalf of the national government, that it will release the full electoral timetable in February 1983. The drafts are sufficiently precise to allow us to make this commitment. An earlier date has not been set because it is possible that all these drafts will require necessary refining and also because there are still talks to be held with the most interested parties, that is, the leaders of political parties. During the time we have left until February, we will carry out these tasks, and I promise -- I repeat -- on behalf of the national government, that the full electoral timetable will be released in February.

As anyone can imagine, the main hallmark of this timetable is the date of the elections. About this I can make a concrete announcement. I cannot give the exact date of the elections, but I can say that they will be held on a single day. This is the decision we have reached: That elections will be held simultaneously and that the electoral timetable which we will announce in February will set the date for the elections we Argentines will hold not later than the first Sunday of November. I repeat: These are the concrete announcements concerning the electoral timetable which will be disclosed in full in February, after the necessary adjustments to it are made.

There is another political measure designated to facilitate the adjustment of this timetable. The government has decided to amend a portion of the law for the organization of political parties which this very government has issued. Thus, on 30 March 1983 the political parties will be able to submit a minimum list of members necessary to organize themselves as political parties. As you know, Article 72 of the above-mentioned law provided for a 6-month period for affiliation. This 6-month period was to be counted from the moment the appropriate electoral judge delivered to the party overseers the affiliation cards which would allow each party to begin its organization.

This opened the possibility that this period could be extended by delays in the delivery of the cards. Thus, the government has decided to set 30 March as the date from which the political parties could submit a minimum list of members necessary. Of course, this does not mean that 30 March is the deadline, those who are not ready by that date can go on with their affiliation tasks, but those who already have the minimum number of members necessary will be able to submit their lists.

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UN RESOLUTION ON FALKLANDS ACCEPTED

PY282002 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1210 GMT 28 Dec 82

[Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 28 Dec (NA) -- Argentina will accept the UN resolution to resume diplomatic negotiations over the Malvinas Islands and will report its decision to the organization on 3 January 1983, the Foreign Ministry reported. On that day, Argentina's Ambassador to the United Nations Carlos Muniz will hand over the document whereby Argentina accepts the UN resolution.

FOREIGN MINISTER, CUBAN AMBASSADOR MEET 27 DECEMBER

PY281224 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0232 GMT 28 Dec 82

[Text] Buenos Aires, 27 Dec (TELAM) -- Foreign Minister Juan Aguirre Lanari met today with Cuban Ambassador Emilio Aragones Navarro at San Martin Palace. Previously, Ambassador Aragones Navarro had met with Oscar Torres Avaloa, head of the Central American and Caribbean Area Department at San Martin Palace.

After the meeting, the Cuban visitor only said that he had presented his greetings to the foreign minister. However, it was learned that during the meeting consideration was given to the agenda and other topics related to the meeting of the the Coordinating Bureau of the Nonaligned Movement which will be held in Managua, Nicaragua, beginning 10 January 1983.

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES RELEASE OF 131 DETAINEES

PY290112 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 28 Dec 82 p 1

[Text] The executive branch announced the release of 131 political prisoners at its disposal yesterday, including former Santa Cruz Governor Jorge Cepernic and Communication Workers Union Leader Isabelino Guillan. In what they termed "the last release" of political prisoners this year, the government also announced another batch of 30 citizens being held at its disposal have been granted conditional liberty.

The statement issued by the executive branch yesterday, listing the names of those who regained their freedom shortly before the end of the year, did not refer to the number of people still being held for political reasons.

OFFICIAL SEES NO PROBLEMS WITH IMF BRIDGE-LOAN

PY290125 Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 2000 GMT 28 Dec 82

[Relay from Ezeiza International Airport]

[Excerpt] Central Bank President Julio Gonzalez del Solar has returned to Argentina. Shortly after his arrival, Dr Gonzalez del Solar was asked by Radio Nacional about the negotiations that are being conducted with the IMF in New York regarding the granting of a bridge-loan. Here are Dr Gonzalez del Solar's remarks:

[Gonzalez del Solar] [The bridge-loan agreement] will be signed in New York at 1700 tomorrow.

[Question] [Words indistinct] Dr Ayerza?

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